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AGRICULTURE OUTREACH PLAN

PY 2013

Wagner-Petser (W-P) Agricultural Outreach: As required in W-P regulations at 20 CFR 653.107, each State Workforce Agency (SWA) must develop an annual outreach plan (AOP), describing its strategies on how to contact Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs) who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by local offices. The AOP also describes the activities planned for providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both MSFWs and agricultural employers, through the American Job Center (AJC) network.

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ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS

Assessment of Needs

PREVIOUS YEAR'S AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY

Tennessee is ranked 8th in the United States for the number of farms. However, since 2011, there has been a decrease in the number of farms to an estimated 77,300 and a decrease in farmland acreage to 10.8 million. Despite the changes, Tennessee farm cash receipts has increased to \$3.5 billion which impacts the state's economy with \$71 billion in total economic activity and more than 363,000 in employment.

Tennessee's top 4 agricultural crops include corn, cotton, soybeans, and tobacco. Crop cash receipts totaled \$2.10 billion with soybeans as the lead cash receipts of \$461 million. Tennessee's tobacco production is considered a major producer in the United States and is rank 4th in all tobacco production. The following charts¹ indicate the major intensive crop activity from 2011, and the timeframes of planting and harvesting activity.

Crop	Acres	Production	Value of Production \$
Corn	790,000	96,285,000	\$ 625,853,000
Cotton	495,000	813,000	\$ 369,715,000
Soybeans	1,290,000	40,000,000	\$ 480,000,000
Tobacco	22,000	45,363,000	\$ 97,859,000
Burley	14,000	22,540,000	\$ 39,670,000
Dark Fired-Cured	69,000	19,941,000	\$ 51,647,000
Dark Air-Cured	1,100	2,882,000	\$ 6,542,000

Crop	Month							
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
Corn								
Grain								
Silage								
Cotton								
Soybeans								
Tobacco								
Burley								
Dark Fired-Cured								
Dark Air-Cured								
Planting Dates								
Harvesting Dates								

¹ Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Ellington Agricultural Center, Tennessee Agricultural 2012

ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS

PREVIOUS YEAR'S MSFW ACTIVITY

Tennessee is considered a non-significant state for Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) as defined by the Department of Labor. This means that the state is not considered to have a large MSFW population, nor any significant local offices. Tennessee has provided service to 11 MSFW during Program Year (PY) 2011.

There are several factors that contributed to the limited number of MSFW workers; however one factor was the increase in H2-A workers. In 2011, agricultural employers placed 192 job orders, requesting a total of 2,137 H2-A workers. The amount of job orders increased in 2012 to 311 job orders, requesting a total of 4,616 H2-A workers. The H-2A program continues to expand in response to employers' requests.

PROJECTED NUMBER OF MSFW'S FOR 2013

Due to the increase in H2-A job orders and request for H2-A workers, Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) does not anticipate an increase in MSFWs. However, TDLWD continues to expand the electronic information and services available within Tennessee's agricultural communities. The department's website, www.jobs4tn.gov, contains a broad array of employment resources for job seekers and employers, and consistently seeks efforts to collaborate with public agencies and organizations to leverage resources to provide information about other community resources.

The department also continues its efforts to assist customers with limited English proficiency.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Outreach Activities

Due to being a non-significant state, TDLWD has not been allocated with a large array of resources for MSFW outreach. Thus, the majority of outreach is implemented by the Tennessee Opportunity Programs (TOPS), 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees. The following portrays the various steps leading to an active enrollment in the TOPS:

1. Case managers reach out into farm communities and identify prospective candidates for the TOPS.
2. Once farm workers are identified, and they demonstrate a compelling interest to obtain new skills and pursue a different and more productive career track, intake applications are completed.
3. Eligibility documents are sought – including birth certificates, selective service registration documents, driver's licenses, work visas, etc.
4. Interviews are held, eligibility is confirmed and skill needs along with ABE and other service needs are identified. Additional interviews are conducted and testing of cognitive abilities is established. An IEP is developed and training and services are secured.
5. Core services are cooperatively arranged and training providers as well as service providers are identified.

If additional services are needed that are beyond the scope of TOPS training and employment and supportive services, the clients are given referrals to other programs such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Veterans Services, or Senior Corps Programs.

TDLWD's staff plans to coordinate with TOPS Directors and case managers to register MSFWs with the goal of notifying MSFWs of the services provided by the TN's American Job Centers (AJC) formerly known as One-Stop Career Centers. TDLWD will also coordinate with TOPS to utilize the mobile career coach units to bring TDLWD's services to MSFWs in their home communities. TDLWD plans to join the Tennessee Migrant Network Council, coalition established by TOPS, in efforts to provide MSFWs with a more comprehensive array of resources and services.

The Tennessee Monitor Advocate will promote and coordinate training for the NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and others in providing services to MSFWs.

AJC SERVICES TO MSFWs

AJC Services to MSFWs

TDLWD plans to work with TOPS case managers to register more MSFWs with our system so that they may receive TDLWD's full array of services. TDLWD plans to:

- Use the www.job4TN.gov Web site,
- Collaborate with mobile unit, and
- Provide a process for TOPS case managers to pre-register MSFWs with our Wagner-Peyser system prior to their arrival at the AJC, to ensure that all services are offered to as many MSFWs as possible.

In addition, TDLWD will offer migrant and seasonal farm workers (MSFWs) the full range of employment services, benefits and protections, including counseling, testing, job training, and referral services. MSFWs, on a proportionate basis, shall not receive fewer services than non-MSFWs. Area office staff shall consider the preferences, needs, and skills of individual MSFWs and the availability of job and training opportunities.

All office staff shall make job order information clear and available to MSFWs in all local offices. This information shall include Job Bank information in local offices where it is available. Such information shall be made available either by computer terminal, microfiche, hard copy, or other equally effective means. Each significant MSFW local office shall provide adequate staff assistance to each MSFW to use the job order information effectively. In those offices designated as significant MSFW bilingual offices, such assistance shall be provided to MSFWs in Spanish and English, wherever requested or necessary, during any period of substantial MSFW activity.

AJC Services to Agricultural Employers

Over the years, TOPS case managers have developed relationships with employers in their respective service areas, and, in so doing, have created a resource bank for continued placement of clients as job openings occur. Work Experience (WE) has always been used as an activity to provide individuals with exposure to and experience in employment positions with which they have had little exposure. For instance, WE allow displaced homemakers to experience the demands and daily activities of the work place. Youth, who have not yet entered the work place, are also provided with this experience. For farm workers, employment in an office setting or venue outside of agriculture presents an alien environment. Everything from workplace dress code to the hours of employment, the manner in which supervision occurs, and how co-workers and management are addressed are foreign to some agricultural workers.

Employers who agree to work with TOPS in Work Experience contracts have also proven to be effective placement tools for the TOPS program. The employers have enable TOPS to place individuals into training sites that have led to fulltime employment, when these placements could not otherwise be accomplished. TDLWD refers MSFWs and other potential candidates to agricultural employers. TDLWD offers employers access to www.jobs4tn.gov, Career Centers to use services, resources, and arrange a place to interview applicants. TDLWD also plans to work more closely with TOPS this coming year on referring MSFWs to H-2A job orders.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data Analysis

PY2011 AGRICULTURAL JOB ORDERS

# of agricultural job orders	192
# of agricultural openings rec'd	2137
# of agricultural job orders filled	2137
% filled	100%
# of interstate clearance orders rec'd	36
# of interstate clearance orders initiated	0

PY2012 AGRICULTURAL JOB ORDERS

# of agricultural job orders	311
# of agricultural openings rec'd	4616
# of agricultural job orders filled	4616
% filled	100%
# of interstate clearance orders rec'd	37
# of interstate clearance orders initiated	0

Year-to-date, TLDWD has processed 250 H2-A job order applications. It is projected that the number of H2-A job orders and request for workers will continue to increase, possibly surpassing PY2012 number of agricultural job orders.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Other Requirements

PUBLIC REVIEW & COMMENT

TDLWD has provided the opportunity for all interested parties to review and comment on the draft PY13 Agricultural Outreach Plan. TOPS, migrant advocacy groups and agricultural employer organizations have been sent the draft plan and their comments were invited. The list of organizations to which the draft plan was sent is included below.

The State Monitor Advocate was involved in development of the plan and approves the plan as drafted.

ORGANIZATIONS INVITED TO REVIEW THE DRAFT AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN

Dyersburg/Dyer County Chamber of Commerce – Agribusiness Development

Nashville Southern Migrant Legal Services

Telamon Corporation – TN Migrant Head Start Program

Tennessee Department of Agriculture

Tennessee Department of Education – Migrant Education, Title I C

Tennessee Department of Health

Tennessee Opportunity Programs, Inc. (TOPS)

USDOL – Wage and Hour Division

University of Tennessee Extension Institute of Agriculture